REMARKS

By this Amendment, claims 28, 29, 30, 31 and 34 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 28-34 are pending in the present application.

Claims 28, 29 and 34 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Okano et al. (US Patent 5,679,928). Claims 30 and 31 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Okano et al. Claims 32 and 33 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Okano et al. in view of Ishio et al. (US Patent 6,448,624). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Among the limitations of independent claims 28, 30 and 34 which are neither disclosed nor suggested in the prior art of record is a bonded structure wherein "the conductive filler and the first low-melting point material are fusion-bonded together". Similarly, the bonded structure of independent claim 31 requires that "the conductive filler is fusion-bonded to the first low-melting-point material and the second low-melting-point material".

One of the important features resulting from the claimed structure and the fusion-bonding of the low-melting-point material and the conductive filler is that the connection between the low-melting-point material and the organic binder is strengthened. As a result, the mechanical strength of the conductive filler is added to the structure to considerably enhance the overall bonding strength.

Unlike the present invention, the conducting particles 21 of Okano et al. are not fusion-bonded the electrically conductive films 34 and 72. Specifically, Okano et al. describes at column 9, lines 13-18, that the conducting particles 21 are prevented from being buried in the electrically conductive films 34 and 72. Thereafter, Okano et al. states in column 9, lines 31-38, that after a high pressure and high temperature are applied, the

electrically conducting particles are merely "partly fitted" into the electrically conducting films, and not fusion-bonded.

Given the above teachings, Okano et al. fails to recognize the relationship between the low-melting-point material and the conductive filler, and as a result, fails to teach that fusion-bonding of the low-melting-point material and the conductive filler increases the overall bonding strength. In fact, inasmuch as Okano et al. merely has the conducting particles "partly fitted" into the electrically conducting films, it teaches away from fusion-bonding the two together.

Ishio et al. does not remedy any of the deficiencies of Okano et al. There is nothing within the teachings of Ishio et al. which teaches or even remotely suggests that conductive particles are fusion-bonded to a low-melting-point material as required by independent claims 28, 30, 31 and 34.

Therefore, even if one were to combine the teachings of Okano et al. and Ishio et al., one would not arrive at the present invention as defined in independent claims 28, 30, 31 and 34. At best, one would arrive at a bonded structure where the conductive particles are "partly fitted" into the low-melting-point material, and not fusion-bonded thereto. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 28, 30, 31 and 34 patentably distinguish over the art of record.

Claims 29, 32 and 33 depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 28 and include all the limitations found therein. Each of these dependent claims include additional limitations which, in combination with the limitations of the claims from which they depend, are neither disclosed nor suggested in the prior art of record. Accordingly, claims 29, 32 and 33 are likewise patentable.

In view of the foregoing, favorable consideration of the amendments to claims 28, 29, 30, 31 and 34, and allowance of the present application with claims 28-34 is respectfully and earnestly solicited.

Dated: May 10, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

By Richard LaCava

Richard LaCava
Registration No.: 41,135
DICKSTEIN SHAPIRO MORIN & OSHINSKY LLP
1177 Avenue of the Americas
41st Floor
New York, New York 10036-2714
(212) 835-1400
Attorney for Applicant